

Evolution of Occupational Therapy Practice: Life History of Marsha Waind, OTR/L

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Introduction

The purpose of the project was to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states. This project is one of 29 life history interviews which are a part of a larger project, which is titled *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*.

The focus of this project was Marsha Waind, an occupational therapist practicing since 1975, with a majority of her career spent in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Description of Participant

She was a graduate of the University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy Program in 1975. Marsha currently works for Altru Health System as the regional services manager.

Marsha has been certified in hand therapy and lymphedema treatment.

She has served as district chair and state president of the North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association (NDOTA), and is currently a chair on the NDOTA Practice Board.

Has been an advocate for OT throughout her career, including working with insurance companies, organizing the outside peer reviewer system in North Dakota, and helping change the OT licensure law.

Methodology

-Qualitative research design using a life history approach

-Participant was assigned from a list of purposively selected participants that were occupational therapists practicing in ND and WY. Initial participant contact was made by the course instructors.

-Data collected through a semi-structured interview that lasted 48 minutes. Audio was recorded via a computer and cell phone

-The interview was conducted in Marsha's Altru Hospital office. The interview was transcribed verbatim from the audio recording of the interview and coded. Four categories with themes emerged from the coding process.

-Informed consent was obtained via email prior to the interview

-The semi-structured interview was guided by an interview schedule prepared by the course instructors; the questions on the interview schedule were designed to be used with all the individuals as part of the larger project. The researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions as needed for each specific interview.

-Trustworthiness was ensured by completing reflective journals about the research process. Additional information about the interview questions was obtained in an email from Marsha following the interview

Data Analysis & Findings

Categories

Professional growth.

- Marsha grew to become passionate about collaboration with other disciplines for the best treatment of her clients.
- Has advocated for COTAs and working alongside other professions.

North Dakota Influences.

- Was an influential person in helping OT reach rural areas throughout the state as the rural context provided challenges to client care and practicing therapists.
- Through her involvement in organizations, she was intentional about trying to connect isolated therapists throughout the state.

Special Interests.

- Advocacy for OT and her clients is important to Marsha's values.
- Her membership in organizations and certifications add special meaning to her daily practice.

Education/School.

- When Marsha went to school, arts and crafts were a primary focus of her curriculum.
- She has been open to learning about and applying different frames of reference and models.

The Kawa model guided the data analysis process. The Kawa model looks at a person's life or career as a flowing river

References

Reed, K.L., & Peters, C. O. (October 6, 2008). Occupational therapy values and beliefs, Part IV; A time of professional identity, 1970-1985-Would the real therapist please stand up? *OT Practice*, 13(18), 15-18.

State Historical Society of North Dakota (2017). *Board of Occupational Therapy Practice*. Retrieved from <http://history.nd.gov/archives/stateagencies/occupationaltherapy.html>

Literature Review

Marsha has served on the North Dakota Board of Occupational Therapy Practice for two terms (3 years long) and her final term expires at the end of 2017. The board was established in 1983 with the purpose of licensing OTR/OTA's and penalizing those who violated their licensure requirements (State Historical Society of North Dakota, 2017)

During the time period 1986-2000, membership in the American Occupational Therapy Association emphasized continuing education courses, advocacy for the profession, and assistance to state associations (Reed & Peters, 2010). Marsha's career experiences are aligned with the trends of OT at the time.

Discussion/Conclusion

Marsha's involvement in leadership and advocacy, and gaining certification in specific practice areas, were influential ways Marsha impacted OT practice in North Dakota. Throughout Marsha's career, occupational therapy has transitioned from an arts-and-crafts focus towards occupation-based, while influential people and continuing education opportunities have impacted her style of practice.

Relating to the Kawa model, Marsha's life experiences and contexts have shaped her career. Her environmental, personal, and professional experiences have both challenged and supported her practice as an occupational therapist, as well as progress the field of OT in North Dakota.